

Mountaineer

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Dec. 8, 2006

Celebrating the holidays



Photo by Michael J. Pach

Two boys convince Santa of how good they've been as they have their picture taken at the Holiday Village in the Special Events Center, Dec. 3. See pages 28-29 for more about Holiday Village.



Photo by Rebecca E. Tonn

Above: Members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Posts 101 and 3917, unload toys, which they donated to Santa's Workshop Tuesday. See page 26 for story.



Photo by Rebecca E. Tonn

Left: Federal Express employees unload 650 Christmas trees, which were donated by the Christmas Spirit Foundation and delivered by FedEx. The trees were distributed to Soldiers at the Mountain Post Outdoor Sports Complex Wednesday and Thursday.

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MUST SEE

Training with a few hard knocks. See Pages 8-9.



Word of the month: **DIGNITY**

Combat Soldier assists wounded pizza man

by Staff Sgt. Lisa Litchfield
2nd Brigade,
91st Division Public Affairs

Capt. Kert Switzer, 2nd Brigade, 91st Division (Training Support), Division West, used Army Combat Lifesaving Skills to render first aid to an injured pizza delivery man Nov. 24. Only two days after his return from Iraq, Switzer said he arrived at his off-post home and noticed what he initially thought to be a drunk man passed out near the front of his home. Switzer said he approached the man to request he leave the premises. It was then that he noticed the puddle of blood and realized something was terribly wrong.

According to Switzer, he immediately took action, using the CLS training that he had received.

"I did what I was trained in CLS,

did an assessment of the casualty," said Switzer. "He was speaking, had an open airway, so I went into managing his injuries. He was bleeding out of the head so I applied pressure to the bleeding to get it to stop, then went into making the patient comfortable until the medics arrived," he said.

While they were waiting for the paramedics, the man told Switzer what had happened. Switzer said he was told that an order for nine pizzas had been placed and when he showed up for the delivery, he was attacked. Switzer reported the man said he was hit across the back of the head and across the shoulders with a broken cinder block.

There was no hesitation in caring for the wounded man, said Switzer.

"Having just got back from Iraq it

See **Hero** on Page 4

When is a military nonresident actually a non-resident?

by Douglas Rule

Fort Carson Public Affairs Office

Just before Thanksgiving, the *Mountaineer* received an e-mail from the spouse of 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division officer stationed at Fort Carson. She and her husband are listed as co-owners on their automobile. When they went to renew their registration, instead of the \$30 they thought they owed as military nonresidents, they were handed a bill for \$180.

The husband is not a resident of Colorado. The wife, however, is a registered voter in Colorado, making her a resident. That voter registration, or in other cases where the spouse works in Colorado and files Colorado state income tax, overrides the tax exemption usually afforded military personnel.

According to Robert C. "Bob" Balink, El Paso County Clerk and Recorder, "All military personnel who are purchasing license plates in El Paso County cannot be a registered voter in the state of Colorado and claim nonresidency, exempting them from the personal property tax (ownership tax) under the Sailors and Soldiers Civil Relief Act or subsequently the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act of 2003."

Balink added, "The military member must provide to our office their military identification and a copy of their driver's license. If it is determined they are registered to vote in Colorado,

they may cancel their registration. However, the military member will not be eligible to claim nonresidency for one full year from the date of this voter cancellation."

To further clarify the issue, Balink noted, "If a voter cancels their Colorado voter registration and registers to vote in another state and can prove they are registered after their cancellation, we will honor the nonresidency in the next renewal cycle even if it is less than one year. If they reregister to vote in Colorado before the next renewal cycle, they will be required to pay the previous year's ownership tax as well as the current year's ownership tax."

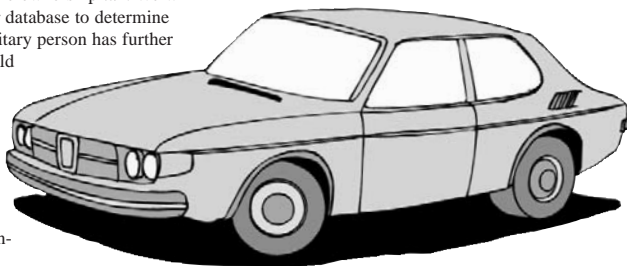
"According to our county attorney, if any person, including spouses, who is listed on the registration works in the state of Colorado or is registered to vote in the state of Colorado, they are responsible for the ownership tax. We will only check the voter database to determine residency. If the military person has further questions, they should address it with their legal representative (Legal Assistance Office)."

In another automotive-related issue, Balink sent out a notification concerning

the end to emissions inspections for gas-powered vehicles registered in El Paso County.

Effective Jan. 1, gasoline emissions inspections in El Paso County will end. Balink suggests that car owners whose registrations end in December 2006 wait until after the first of the year to renew those registrations during the one-month grace period. This would save the fee for emissions inspection. He noted that if the renewal is accomplished in December, the vehicle will have to have the inspection and that the \$25 fee will not be refunded for any months prior to January 2007.

The emissions testing is no longer required as El Paso County meets the Environmental Protection Agency's National Ambient Air Quality Standards and it is expected that the county will continue to meet those standards.



Q: *Why does being a registered voter establish me as a resident?*

A: A citizen is acknowledging they are a resident when they register to vote.

Q: *What is the state statute that requires payment of ownership tax by a Colorado resident?*

A: C.R.S. 42-3-101

Q: *What is the purpose of the Soldier's and Sailor's Relief Act? Will this exempt me from paying taxes in Colorado?*

A: The Soldier's and Sailor's relief Act began in 1918, modified in 1940 and 1942 and again in 2003 as the Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act. It basically provides a moratorium for military members only (not spouses) for some civil obligations. Colorado has determined that if a servicemember is on active duty, stationed in Colorado and claims another state as the home state of residence, he can be exempt from Specific Ownership Tax if he fills out a DR 2667 form.

Q: *How do I cancel my voter registration in Colorado?*

A: The election department of the Clerk and Recorders office will have you fill out a Voter Registrations form and write CANCEL on it.

Q: *If the registered voter is removed from the title (non-military party), will the military party then be eligible for the nonresident exemption?*

A: Yes, provided the DR 2667 is properly filled out.

Q: *Are the military bases being educated on the new requirements?*

A: There is no change, these are not new requirements. We continue to work with the military offices on any issues or questions the military community may have.

Q: *If I am a registered voter in Colorado, have voted in Colorado, I cancel my registration, how long must I wait before I am eligible to claim the military nonresident status?*

A: One year, which is the equivalent of one renewal cycle, unless you can prove that you are registered in another state after canceling in Colorado. You will then be eligible to

reapply for the Military Non-residency in the next renewal cycle.

Q: *If I am a registered voter in Colorado, have not voted in Colorado, I cancel my registration, how long must I wait before I am eligible to claim the military nonresident status?*

A: One year, which is the equivalent of one renewal cycle, unless you can prove that you are registered in another state after canceling in Colorado. You will then be eligible to re-apply for the Military Nonresidency in the next renewal cycle.

Q: *If I am a registered voter in Colorado, and I have not voted, will I be able to cancel my voter registration and be eligible for the military exemption if I was never a registered voter in another state?*

A: Yes, after one year, this is the equivalent of one renewal cycle. You will then be eligible to reapply for the Military Nonresidency in the next renewal cycle.

Q: *What documents are acceptable as proof that I am a registered*

voter in another state? Will a fax or photocopy of the document be acceptable?

A: A certificate from the location where you are registered. A photocopy or fax will suffice as long as it is clearly from a government agency.

Q: *If I pay full resident fees, will I be able to obtain a refund on my ownership tax when I provide proof that I am registered voter in another state?*

A: We will provide a refund, if requested within 30 days.

Q: *If there are multiple owners on a vehicle title (1 owner military & 1 owner Colorado resident), and county records indicate that non-resident status was previously granted, can we continue to be registered in Colorado once vehicle owners are no longer stationed in Colorado?*

A: We can still register in Colorado assuming all other laws and statutes are followed, but the military non-residency would not apply as they were not stationed in Colorado. All ownership taxes would need to be paid.

MOUNTAINEER

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NEWS

\$50.1 million Fort Carson military construction spending bill passed

*courtesy of the office of
Senator Wayne Allard*

WASHINGTON — U.S. Senator Wayne Allard (R-Colo.) announced Nov. 14 that the U.S. Senate passed the fiscal year 2007 military construction spending bill, which included \$50.1 million for improvements at Fort Carson and \$61.8 million for other Colorado Springs installations.

"I will continue to fight for the military community in Colorado to ensure their facilities receive the adequate funding to achieve success," said Allard. "These numbers reflect the high priority that our military installations in southern Colorado have been given by the U.S. Senate."

Funding for Fort Carson improvements approved by the Senate includes: \$24 million for phase 2 of the airfield arrival/departure complex and \$26.1 million for the Special Operations complex.

The military construction funding bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives earlier this year and will now move to a House-Senate Conference Committee, where a final version will be produced. Allard, as a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, will serve on the Conference Committee.

DIMHRS brings self-service capabilities to Soldiers

Army News Service

WASHINGTON—The Army plans to transform the way it manages its human resources by launching the Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System in early 2008.

DIMHRS is a secure, self-service Web system that will give Soldiers 24/7 access to personnel data and the ability to update and review key personnel and family information without seeing a personnel specialist.

"DIMHRS is a congressional mandated program spearheaded by DOD, and will result in the Army significantly transforming the way it delivers military personnel and pay," said Maj. Gen. Carlos (Butch) Pair, Defense Business Systems Acquisitions executive. "DIMHRS will provide Soldiers significant Web-based self-service capabilities, integrate all components on one database, and significantly reduce workload for commanders and Soldiers."

The self-service system will

help Soldiers avoid traditional written or verbal processes that can be time-consuming and costly.

DIMHRS will enable Soldiers to initiate requests for assignments, training, retirement, record updates, awards, family-member travel, transition from the Reserve to Regular commission, enlistment extensions, various waivers and enlisted commissioning programs.

DIMHRS' self-service capabilities will also allow Soldiers to more efficiently start, stop or modify discretionary allotments and savings bonds; complete an Employee Withholding Request (Form W-4); complete an Employee Reissue W-2 Request; change personal direct-deposit information; and change their state of legal-residence declaration.

"This real-time functionality will decrease processing time for personnel-action requests and improve customer service by virtually turning the personnel-action process into an almost paperless environment," said Sgt. 1st Class Jose Miranda,

DIMHRS Clearinghouse non-commissioned officer.

Soldiers will be able to track the progress of their requests from initial submission to final approval. Electronic signatures, e-mail notifications and automatic routing are also available.

Another key function in DIMHRS is the view-only screen, which lets Soldiers view such personnel and pay items as family member information; Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD 214) and any corrections to their DD Form 214; Service Members' Group Life Insurance election; Leave & Earnings Statements and Wage and Tax Statement (Form W-2); Record Brief; currently assigned checklists; a record of civilian and military education, awards, contracts, and evaluations; and a Department of the Army photo.

For more information, visit the Army DIMHRS Program Web site at www.armydimhrs.army.mil/suite/page/308853.

Hero

From Page 1

was almost a battle drill,” he said. “As soon as I realized that the guy was actually hurt, it was almost instinctive to go and try and figure out what was going on, go through the react to casualty battle drill, go through those procedures.”

Although Switzer was trained to react to this type of situation, it did bother him to perform lifesaving tasks so close to home.

“It was an odd situation to be in to realize that we have the violence right here literally on our own front door step when I am coming back from a combat zone,” Switzer said.

Switzer said he wishes he could have done more.

“If I had been there a minute sooner I might have prevented the entire incident by being there and stopping it before anything happened, or 30 seconds sooner and I could have probably apprehended somebody,” he said.

Although he was unable to prevent the incident, Switzer said he was glad he could help. “I was actually able to put skills I had to

Free ‘Rosetta Stone’ foreign language training available to Soldiers

by Phil Manson

First U.S. Army

FORT GILLEM, Ga. —

With foreign language skills becoming more critical to the Army’s mission every day, the Army has made “Rosetta Stone” foreign language training available through Army e-Learning.

“‘Rosetta Stone’ provides the Army with an immediate, interactive language training tool to train our Soldiers, leaders and civilians for operational deployments as well as professional development,” said Brig.

Gen. James M. Milano, director of training, Army G-3/5/7.

Army e-Learning serves as the Web-based language training platform the Army needs to strengthen its language capabilities. The language courses, available in 26 different languages, including conversational Arabic, are available via the web 24 hours a day from any place in the world — and it’s completely free for all Army organizations.

To register for Army e-Learning, go to <https://www.army.mil/ako>. It is recommended that you register with your Common Access Card. Just

click on the “log into AKO” link and follow the instructions to register your CAC.

Once registered and on the main AKO page, click the “Self-Service” header, find “My Education” and click Army e-Learning. From there, click on the Army e-Learning link and go to “New User” link and register. After registering, you will be able to access all of the “Rosetta Stone” language modules.

For more information please contact Capt. Kevin Groppe at 526-2237 or e-mail kevin.groppe@carson.army.mil.

MILITARY

'Roughriders' Battalion saddles up for Fort Bliss deployment

by **Sgt. Zachary Shumway**

2nd Brigade, 91st Division Public Affairs

Army Reserve Soldiers of the Salt Lake City-based 3rd "Roughriders" Battalion, 360th Combat Support/Combat Service Support Regiment, are mounting up and preparing to deploy to Fort Bliss, Texas. During their upcoming deployment Roughriders will train Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen for upcoming deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan.

According to Roughriders officials, the deployment follows a year of intense training during drill weekends and a two week annual training deployment to Fort Riley, Kan. The upcoming deployment will be the second time the battalion has deployed to Fort Bliss since 2004.

Roughriders Battalion commander Lt. Col. Marc Van Oene said his battalion is ready to lead training at Fort Bliss. "We are very prepared for this mission. Our regular training during the last two years has more than prepared us to assume this mission," he said.

Van Oene said he expects about 30 active duty, Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers to mobilize out of Salt Lake City to support this operation. Additionally, he believes there will be between 50 and 100 Soldiers from the Roughrider's parent unit, 2nd "Dagger" Brigade, 91st Division (Training Support), Division West, First Army, made available to augment the training. "At this time the final task organization has

not been made. However, I expect the Roughriders Battalion to play the decisive role at Fort Bliss," he said.

"The tasks we will train are for the most part exactly what we trained at Fort Riley. Our train up for Fort Riley and the Military Transition Team Training that we executed is why the brigade commander selected Roughriders for this mission," Van Oene said.

Roughriders will be called upon to train several tasks at Fort Bliss, Van Oene said. "We will be responsible for training convoy patrol practice exercises and live-fire exercises; clearing a room, and cordon and search. Additionally we will be conducting forward operating base operations. These are daily and nightly attacks or encounters with Iraqi and Afghan civilians." According to Van Oene, all the training Roughriders will conduct is designed to mirror conditions faced by Soldiers currently in theater.

"We will have a good cross-section of experience from Iraq and Afghanistan. The Operation Warrior Trainers all have recent combat experience. This will enhance our ability to conduct excellent training," Van Oene said in addition to combat veterans he would also have several trainers who previously deployed with Roughriders to Fort Bliss in 2004. "I will have some of those veterans with me when we go back this time."

One of those OWTs is Master Sgt. Brent E. Wiechman. He is a two-time veteran of Roughriders deployments including the battalion's previous deployment to Fort Bliss in 2004.

"We have been training all year for this mission," Wiechman said. He added that Roughriders conducted live-fire exercises at two separate sites in Utah and received training on improvised explosive devices, combat lifesaver course and extended crew-served weapons training at Fort Riley this summer.

Although he expects some changes, Wiechman believes the training Roughriders will conduct at Fort Bliss will be similar to what they have already been training. "There maybe some changes on the lane, but the concept should be right in line with what we taught at Fort Riley and Dugway Proving Ground this past year."

As the expected deployment date nears,



Photo by Staff Sgt. Alyn-Michael Macleod

Members of a Military Transition team conducts an after-action review with members of the "Roughrider" Battalion after they completed a live fire exercise at Fort Riley, Kan.

Engineer Battalion activates

by Capt. Heath Pakkov
4th Engineer Battalion

The ongoing Global War on Terrorism has shown the importance of engineers on the battle field. The growing request for additional engineer assets has caused the Army leadership to stand up additional engineer units to support the growing needs of commanders.

One of these engineer units is the 4th Engineer Battalion located at Fort Carson. The Secretary of the Army announced the activation of the 4th Engineer Battalion (Combat Effects) effective May 30. The purpose of the 536-Soldier unit is to provide combat engineering support

to military commands throughout the world. The 4th Engineer Battalion (Combat Effects) is comprised of Headquarters Company, Forward Support Company, 62d Engineer Sapper Company, 569th Mobility Augmentation Company and the 576th Mobility Augmentation Company.

In 1953, the battalion settled at Fort Carson, where it remained until de-activating in 2004. The 4th Engineer Battalion (Combat Effects) has a long history that is prestigious and vast with campaign credits through some of this country's toughest wars. These credits include the Civil War, the War with Spain, the Philippine Insurrection,

World War I, World War II, the Vietnam Conflict, Operation Desert Storm, and most recently Operation Iraqi Freedom. Through all of these wars, the Battalion stood strong in the face of adversity and was decorated for its valor and successes.

On Oct. 18, the 4th Engineer Battalion (Combat Effects) was officially activated. The battalion is commanded by Lt. Col. Erik Stor who is now responsible for bringing this battalion to a fully capable status able to support the ongoing fight against the war on terrorism. The 4th Engineer Battalion is currently working around the clock to equip, man and train for its future missions.



Courtesy photo

Lt. Col. Erik Stor passing the battalion colors to Command Sgt. Maj. Matthew Thomas.

Military briefs

Miscellaneous

Retirement briefing — for Dec. 20 has been cancelled. Briefings will resume starting in January, every 2nd and 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Operation Warrior Trainer — The OWT program is looking for reserve component Soldiers returning from overseas operations to serve as observer/controller trainers. Reservists have 180 days to apply following demobilization. Call Lt. Col. Michael Hauser at 526-5501 for details or visit www.first.army.mil and click on the Uncle Sam poster.

Officer Candidate School — Packet submissions for direct select and local OCS are now handled by the Personnel Services Battalion in building 1218, room 160. OCS direct selection is in effect until Sept. 30, 2007, and there are still slots open. Contact Tom Grady at 526-3947 for more information.

Finance in- and out-processing — The in- and out-processing section of finance has consolidated its operations on the second floor of building 1218. Travel and accessions moved from the first floor of building 1218 to the second floor.

Customers for in- and out-processing should go to room 230 in building 1218, sign in and wait for a technician. Phone numbers remain the same: separations 526-8473/8476/1302; retirement 526-4233/4234/8470; travel 526-9930/0507/0475; accessions 526-8479/8236/4558; and chief of in- and out-processing 526-6230.

Environmental Health training — The Environmental Health section of Preventive Medicine offers heat category monitoring training, food service sanitation training and classes on hot and cold weather injuries, sexually transmitted diseases, hearing conservation and medical threat briefings. For more information on these classes call 526-7922 or 524-2238.

DPW services — The Directorate of Public Works is responsible for a wide variety of services on Fort Carson. Services range from repair and maintenance of facilities to equipping units with a sweeper and cleaning motor pools. Listed below are phone numbers and points of contact for services:

- Facility repair/service orders — KIRA service order desk can be reached at 526-5345. Use this number for emergencies or routine tasks.
- Refuse/trash — Call Kandy Clark at 526-9243 when needing trash containers, trash is overflowing or emergency service is required.
- Facility custodial services — Call Larry Haack at 526-9237 for service needs or to report complaints.
- Elevator maintenance — Call Sharon Gayle at 526-1695.
- Motor pool sludge removal/disposal — Call Kandy Clark at 526-9243.
- Repair and utility/self-help — Call Gary Grant at 526-5844. Use this number to obtain self-help tools and equipment or a motorized sweeper.

- Base operations contract Contracting Officer Representative — Call Terry Hagen at 526-9262 for reporting wind damage, snow removal concerns, damaged traffic signs or other facility damage.

- Portable latrines — Call Kandy Clark at 526-9243 to request latrines, for service or to report damaged or overturned latrines.

Hours of Operation

CIF Regular business hours — The Central Issue Facility has changed its operating hours. The CIF is no longer open on Fridays. Soldiers may make appointments by calling 526-3321. Listed below are the new operating hours.

In-processing

Monday-Thursday from 7:30-10:30 a.m.

Initial issues

Monday-Thursday from 12:30-3 p.m.

Partial issues

Monday-Thursday from 12:30-3 p.m.

Cash sales/report of survey

Monday-Thursday from 7:30 a.m.-3 p.m.

Direct exchange

Monday-Thursday from 12:30-3 p.m.

Partial turn-ins

Monday-Thursday from 12:30-3 p.m.

Full turn-ins

Monday-Thursday 7:30-10:30 a.m.

Unit issues and turn-ins

Call 526-5512/6477 for approval.

Education Center hours of operation — The Mountain Post Training and Education Center's hours are as follows:

- **Counselor Support Center** — Monday through Thursday 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and Friday, 11 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

- **Learning Resource Center** — Monday through Thursday 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; and training holidays 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

- **Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support and Advanced Personnel Testing** — Monday-Friday 7:30-11:30 a.m. and 12:15-4:15 p.m.; closed training holidays.

- **Basic Skills Education Program/Functional Academic Skills Training** — Monday-Thursday 1-4 p.m.; closed training holidays.

- **eArmyU Testing** — Monday-Friday, 12:15-4:15 p.m.; closed training holidays.

- **Military Occupational Specialty Library** — Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Saturday 10 a.m.-3 p.m.; and training holidays 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

- **Legal Assistance hours** — Operating hours for the Legal Assistance Office are Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Friday from 9-11:30 a.m. and 1-4 p.m.

- **Trial defense service hours** — TDS hours of operation are Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. TDS is closed on Fridays except for appointments and emergencies. Chapters briefings are held Tuesdays and

Thursdays at 1 p.m., and Article 15 briefings are held Tuesdays and Thursdays at 1:30 p.m.

Claims Division hours — The Claims Division office hours are Monday-Thursday from 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Friday from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. and closed federal and training holidays.

To make a claim, Soldiers must attend a mandatory briefing, which is given Mondays and Wednesdays at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

At the briefing, Soldiers must submit a Department of Defense Form 1840/1840R. Submit completed claims Tuesdays and Thursdays.

DFAC hours — Fort Carson dining facilities operate under the following hours:

Wolf Inn — Monday-Friday 7-9 a.m. (breakfast), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (lunch) and 4:30-6:30 p.m. (dinner). Weekend hours are 7:30-9 a.m., 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. and 4:30-6 p.m.

Butts Army Airfield — Monday-Friday 7-9 a.m. (breakfast), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (lunch) and 4:30-6:30 p.m. (dinner). This DFAC is closed weekends.

Patton Inn — Monday-Friday 7:30-9 a.m. (breakfast), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (lunch) and 5-7 p.m. (dinner). Weekend hours are 7:30-9 a.m., 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. and 4:30-6 p.m.

10th SFG — Monday-Friday 7-9 a.m. (breakfast), 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (lunch) and 4:30-6 p.m. (dinner). This DFAC is closed weekends.

Briefings

Special Forces briefings — will be held Wednesdays at building 1217, room 305, from 10-11 a.m., noon-1 p.m. and 5-6 p.m.

Soldiers must be E4-E6 from any military occupational specialty; have a general technical score of at least 100; be a U.S. citizen; score 229 or higher on the Army Physical Fitness Test; and pass a Special Forces physical. Call 524-1461 or visit the Web site at www.bragg.army.mil/sorb.

ACAP briefing — The Army Career and Alumni Program prepreparation briefing is required for all departing servicemembers. Current ACAP policy requires personnel ending time in service to register one year out and retirees two years out. ACAP prepreparation briefings are held Monday-Thursday from 7:30-9 a.m.

Attendees should report to ACAP by 7:15 a.m. to building 1117, room 114. Call 526-1002 to schedule the briefing.

ETS briefing — ETS briefings for enlisted personnel will be held the first and third Tuesday of each month until further notice.

Briefing sign-in begins at 7 a.m. at building 1042, room 310. Briefings will be given on a first-come, first-served basis.

Soldiers must be within 120 days of their ETS but must attend the briefing no later than 30 days prior to their ETS or start date of transition leave. Call 526-2240 for more information.

Fort Carson's 2nd Bn 12th Infantry brings hope to al Doura

Story and photo by Spc. Alexis Harrison

*2nd Brigade Combat Team,
1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs*

BAGHDAD—In recent weeks, the al Doura District of the Iraqi capital has been a hotbed of activity. It's been the epicenter of a power struggle between terrorists and progress for the Iraqi people.

Commanders from the 2nd "Black Jack" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division and their counterparts from Fort Carson, have stressed the importance of securing the district for the sake of the people who live there.



Sgt. Daniel Salazar, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division keeps watch from atop a roof during morning patrols through Baghdad. The unit has been patrolling the al Doura district of Baghdad in hopes of curtailing the violence.

Lt. Col. Stephen Michael, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, said this area is of the utmost importance.

Michael said his troops have been busy patrolling the streets of the district with hopes of bringing a little more freedom to the locals who want to see peace in their neighborhoods.

"There's a simple mantra to this battalion," Michael said. "We're here for the Iraqi people and are against anyone who is against the Iraqi people."

The 2-12th troops have been in the area for only a few weeks. They replaced the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment (Air Assault) out of Fort Campbell, Ky., which was attached to the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. The 2-506th recently handed operations over to the 2-12th and the "Warriors" from Colorado wasted no time in taking over.

Troops from Company A, 2-12th were on for the first shift. Before the sun was up, they had their briefings done, their gear on and their trucks ready to roll out.

They first went to pick up their Iraqi counterparts from the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Brigade of the Iraqi national police department before continuing into the sector.

The troops were greeted like family by the police. Though the language barrier wasn't easy to overcome, the troops conversed about their wives, children and American life with the policemen.

In quick order, though, the conversations ended and the mission began. It was all business.

Early into their shift through the sector, the troops began what they called a "block party." After

cordoning off a small section of houses, the troops would make random checks on houses, making sure their presence was felt.

Keeping an eye on things from a rooftop was Sgt. Daniel Salazar and Sgt. Derek Geringer. Salazar said they didn't have the most action-filled position during the operation, but they knew the importance of just keeping watch over their fellow Soldiers.

Staff Sgt. Nelson Grizales noted how the Iraqi people seemed to be thankful to the troops, who kept their neighborhood safer.

"We want to bring a sense of security for the people of al Doura," Grizales said. "The more the locals see us, they'll see we're here to help. We want to let the insurgents know we're here and we're not scared."

As the Soldiers moved through the community, Iraqi children would come up to say "hello" and ask for chocolate. The children waved and smiled as the humvees rumbled down their street.

Staff Sgt. David Brown said locals have been receptive to not only his troops but the policemen that accompanied them. Brown emphasized the importance of having the police ride with his troops.

"It's not about the tribe, it's about the entire community working together," Brown said of the interactions between local residents and the police.

The platoon continued to patrol for a few more hours until the policemen needed an escort back to their base. Salazar remarked about how nice it was to have an uneventful day.

"I was two-for-two up until now. The last couple times I've been out, we got (fired at with rocket-propelled grenades) and shot at a few times," Salazar said. "Sometimes, boring is nice."

Combatives trainers seek

Story and photos by Michael J. Pach
Mountaineer staff

Combatives instructor, Staff Sgt. Vincent Miller, 360th Infantry Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 91st Division (Training Support), Division West, First Army is working on a program at Fort Carson to put together a team of Soldiers to compete in the annual All-Army Combatives Tournament at Fort Benning, Ga., in November 2007.

Miller's goal, with the help of trainers, Staff Sgt. David Sansolis and Sgt. 1st Class Ted Michalski of the 362nd Armored Battalion, is to get all the units on post involved in combatives training and to hold unit-level tournaments by April. The top unit-level competitors would go on to battalion- and brigade-level tournaments in June and July. A post tournament is planned for August with the top Soldiers competing for 12 spots on the team that would enter the competition at Fort Benning.

While stationed at Fort Riley, Kan., Miller fought for and won a spot on the All-Riley team that competed in the All-Army Combatives Tournament. This team finished in second place overall, just three points behind the first place team.

"If a team from Fort Riley can do that, a team from Fort Carson can do even better with the support of the unit commanders, some good fighters and some hard training," Miller said.

The Army has mandated that all Soldiers

experience hand-to-hand fighting prior to engaging in combat by completing level 1 combatives training. Level 1 and level 2 combatives training courses are conducted on post through the Individual Readiness Training Company. Individual Readiness Training Combatives officer-in-charge, Capt. Eric Albarracin and noncommissioned-officer-in-charge, Sgt. 1st Class Isaac Deal, 64th Forward Support Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, schedule one level 1 course per month and one level 2 course per quarter.

The main objectives of the combatives training courses are to teach Soldiers how to close and fight with the enemy without the use of weapons and to instill the fighter mentality of the warrior ethos using techniques drawn from wrestling and marital arts disciplines. This is all done in an environment that stresses the safety of the trainees with medics on hand.

Level 1 training is also used to certify Soldiers as level 1 trainers so they can teach combatives skills to other Soldiers in their units.

"It's a good morale booster for the Soldiers," said Michalski about training. "This is stuff they can use anywhere."

While training military transition teams deploying to Afghanistan and Iraq, Miller developed and conducted a physical training program that the Soldiers found beneficial.

"The Soldiers enjoyed the training so much,



Combatives instructor, Staff Sgt. Vincent Miller, engages a trainee in a level 1 exercise.

they would call me after duty hours to do extra training with them," said Miller.

Anyone that who like to schedule level 1 or level 2 training can contact Deal at 330-8305. Anyone interested in competing for a spot in the All-Army Combatives Tournament can contact Miller at 526-8686, 264-1937 or vincent.s.miller@us.army.mil.

All-Army team

Right: Sgt. 1st Class Ted Michalski, 362nd Armored Battalion, observes students in body position exercises as part of level 1 combatives training.



Right: Combatives instructors, in black shirts, demonstrate body position techniques to a group of level 1 trainees.



Left: A student ties up instructor, Staff Sgt. David Sansolis, as Capt. Eric Albarracin, Individual Readiness Training Company, left, observes.



Staff Sgt. Keith Allen, 91st Division (Training Support), tries to keep his opponent from closing during level 1 training.

COMMUNITY

Town meets to discuss growth

by Debbie Evert

Space Guardian

Several hundred people squeezed into a conference room at the Antlers Hilton Hotel Nov. 17 to discuss issues related to the expansion of Fort Carson.

Maj. Gen. Robert W. Mixon Jr., commanding general, Division West, First Army and Fort Carson, sat on a panel with local civilian leaders, including Colorado Springs city manager Lorne Kramer and Jeri Howells, mayor of Fountain.

Billed as a town-hall meeting, John Weiss, publisher of The Independent, began by telling the audience that the meeting was called to help the community prepare for the influx of Soldiers and their families.

Although the timeline is fluid, Weiss said about 25,000 Soldiers and family members will be coming to Fort Carson during the next few years. Including increases in the local Air Force bases, Colorado Springs could see a total of 150,000 military-related residents in its population by 2009.

The second reason to have the meeting, Weiss said, was to build rapport.

"We want to build dialogue and trust between the two groups (military and civilians)," he said.

The bulk of the town hall meeting was devoted to interaction with city leaders and Mixon. In addition to Kramer and Howells, other leaders on the panel were Rob MacDonald of the Pikes Peak Area Council of Governments and Tony Koren of the Colorado Defense Mission Coalition. Mike Miles, superintendent of Harrison School District 2, served as moderator.

The panel members spoke to the audience about their particular area of interest as it related to the incoming soldiers and families.

While panel members were speaking, audience members were given the opportunity to write questions, which were fielded throughout the presentations.

Mixon began by saying that in his "32 years of service, I've never been more proud of Soldiers and families and seen a community more positive and supportive. It's a distinct privilege to get to know you."

He summarized the moves Fort Carson already has made and highlighted some specifics about upcoming troop movement.

"I think we'll be at war at least 10 more years," Mixon said.

The crowd gasped.

"I'm not going to beat around the bush," Mixon added.

While one attendee speculated about what

would happen if the growth did not occur, Mixon said "the chances of troop reduction are reasonably small."

McDonald said that the Council of Governments is approaching the population explosion by asking how best it can serve. To help with problems that might arise because of the expansion, about \$55 million has been committed to helping motorists get on- and off-post easier. The council also has received a \$518,000 grant to study the impact that the growth will have.

Koren identified three areas of importance: transportation, K-12 schools and accessible/affordable housing.

School districts take a head count of students one day a year to gauge where the most pressing needs are and how to budget. Additionally, the Department of Defense assists local school districts impacted with the children of Soldiers attending schools that do not get tax dollars from either Soldiers' salaries or on-post housing, which is not figured into local revenues. He said District 8 will perform a second count to get a more accurate reading.

"Housing is really key," Koren said. "We've made good movement in that direction and we cannot stop doing this."

Kramer echoed Koren's comments about traffic congestion and said that the city was studying solutions, such as increasing bus route hours to Fort Carson. He also tried to squelch the assumption that an increase in military personnel results in an increase in crime.

"They contribute more than they take away," Kramer said.

Howell, mayor of Fountain since 2005, leads a community that has 22,000 residents. Fountain might bear the brunt of the growth because of its proximity to the post. Howell discussed two areas that will impact the community. The first is economic.

"We are hoping to attract new businesses and hoping to expand current businesses," she said. "We also hope to attract medical care facilities."

The second area she addressed is education.

"We (Fountain) expect to receive half of the new students," Howell said. "The facilities' capacities will not be able to meet the demand in time. We lost \$1 million last year because not all students were there on 'count day.'"

When asked about the amount of housing that would be needed, Mixon said that he is required to provide on-post housing for 30 percent of his troops. He expects an additional 400 units on post.

"The average soldier is 23 years old, married, with two kids," Mixon said. "His housing allowance is \$800-\$850."

Other questions brought up by the audience dealt with employment, recycling, road maintenance and health care. The panel members said they were ready to meet those challenges.

"We're not intimidated by the rapid growth in the community," Kramer said.

Mixon said that the military was ready as well.

"Growth relates to capabilities," he said, "and we're capable."



Photo by Michael J. Pach

Maj. Gen. Robert W. Mixon Jr., commanding general, Division West, First Army and Fort Carson, addresses the audience at the Nov. 17 town Hall Meeting.

Community briefs

Miscellaneous

Martin Luther King Jr. Art Contest for children — Fort Carson Equal Employment Opportunity Office is hosting a children's Martin Luther King Jr., art contest in preparation for Black History Month celebrations. There are four age groups: up to age 5; ages 6-8; ages 9-11; and ages 12-18. Entries are due by Jan. 9 and should be turned in at any Child and Youth Services Center or CYS Central Registration Office. For more information, call Patricia Rosas at 526-9673 or e-mail her at patricia.rosas@carson.army.mil.

Army Family Team Building celebration — The AFTB celebrates its 12th birthday Dec. 14 from 1-3 p.m. with an open house at the Family Readiness Center. Join the celebration and view displays of 12 years of "Making a Difference" at Fort Carson. Light refreshments will be served.

El Paso County Department of Health and Environment — is offering free flu shots, tomorrow, from 10 a.m.-noon, while supplies last, at Skyview Middle School, 6350 Windom Peak Blvd. El Paso County residents are encouraged to attend this full-scale emergency preparedness exercise, titled Operation Vaccinate. Residents will receive free vaccinations in exchange for their participation in this emergency exercise that will help the EPCDHE prepare for a possible wide-scale public health crisis. Operation Vaccinate is for persons age 9 years and older. Children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. This is a first-come, first-served basis, until vaccine supplies are gone. Visit www.elpasocountyhealth.org.

El Paso County School District Eight — The President of the Board of Education of Fountain-Fort Carson School District Eight has called a regular meeting to be held Tuesday, at 6 p.m., in the conference room of the Central Administration Building, 425 W. Alabama Ave, Fountain. The agenda is available at www.ffc8.org or at the Central Administration Building.

Fort Carson Veterinary Treatment Facility holiday closures — The veterinary facility will be closed Dec. 23-26, Dec. 30 and Jan. 1-2 for the holidays. Please contact a local civilian veterinarian for pet emergencies during these days.

2006 Army Digital Photography Contest — Don't miss your chance to showcase your talent. Deadline is Sunday. Categories include color digital images and monochrome images of people, places, objects, military life and experimental processes. Entry forms and information are available at www.armymwr.com, go to Recreation, contest and events or visit the Smith Craft Center, building 2426, Wetzel Avenue, next to the Auto Craft Center. The number for Smith Craft Center is 526-0900/3487.

Job openings — Fountain-Fort Carson School District Eight has openings for an assistant kitchen manager and for food-service workers. For more information call 382-1334 or apply in person at

11355 Old Pueblo Road in Fountain.

Video Messenger — is free at the library. Soldiers and family members can record a video in either mini-DVD or VHS before and during deployments. Call 526-2350 to schedule an appointment.

Continuing education grants available — through the Fort Carson Community Thrift Shop. Five \$1,000 grants are available for eligible applicants. Military spouse or immediate family member no active duty. Must be in good academic standing, with a minimum grade point average of 3.0. Contact Gail Olson for application procedures at 526-5966/9422 or thriftshop@gmail.com. The application deadline is Thursday.

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings — are held each Wednesday from 7-8 p.m. at the Colorado Inn, corner of Sheridan Avenue and Woodfill Road, building 7301, room 203. Call 322-9766 or 471-1625 for more information.

Harr Avenue reconstruction — from Titus Boulevard north to Coleman Avenue will begin Monday and continue for approximately 12 months, in four phases. Phase one includes the Titus Boulevard intersection to a point south of the north entrance to Aleutian Circle, and weather permitting, will be completed by the end of February.

The contract includes replacing all of the asphalt, pouring concrete curb and gutters on both sides of the road, and the construction of 800 linear feet of sidewalks along the east side of the road.

Hypertension class — Do you have high blood pressure? Do you want to lower your risk of heart disease? A hypertension class is presented every other Thursday from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the Mountain Post Wellness Center, building 1526. To register or for more information call 526-7022. The class is presented by Disease Management and Nutrition Care.

No physical training zone — The area under construction, north of Ranges 69 and 5, should not be used for any training at any time. Construction is under way. The area is bracketed to the north by Khe Sahn Street, to the east by Berkeley Avenue, and to the west by Brown Road, Titus Boulevard and Specker Avenue.

Fort Carson fire department — will conduct a prescribed burn program, in accordance with permits issued by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and in coordination with the El Paso County Department of Health and Environment, continuing until the end of December, weather permitting. For more information contact the Fort Carson Public Affairs Office at 526-1264/4113. After hours contact the 24-hour Emergency Operations Center at 526-5500 and ask for the on-call public affairs officer.

Directorate of Environmental Compliance and Management — Building 6287, near Prussman and Mekong, is being dismantled and demolished and will continue until Dec. 31. Stay out of the area and do not park within 100 feet of the building. Call Eldon Granger at 526-1687 for further information.

Child and Youth Services, Caring Saturdays — Free child care for families of deployed Soldiers is offered the first and third Saturday of

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE
ACS
Family Life Solutions for Successful Army Living

Army Community Service
Family Readiness Center, Bldg 1526
TEL: (719) 526-4590

Sign Language Interpreters

Do you know how to sign?

Would you like to assist families by making a difference in their lives?

If so, the Army Community Service (ACS) Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) needs you. The EFMP is looking for interested Sign Language Interpreters to volunteer by assisting with various services and events. Help us make a difference.

For more information, call (719) 526-4590 or stop by and visit the Family Readiness Center, Building 1526.



each month, from noon to 7 p.m., in the East Child Development Center, building 6058. Families must bring a copy of their sponsor's deployment orders and their child's up-to-date immunization record. For reservations call 524-4218. For further information call 526-1101.

Evans Army Community Hospital — The correspondence division of the Patient Administration Department will be closing Thursdays from noon-6 p.m. Release of information requests will not be taken during this time. This will create faster turnaround time for copies of records.

Ongoing road closures — Portions of Specker Avenue and Titus Boulevard will be closed until April. Questions about the closure or disruption of traffic along Butts Road can be addressed to Fort Carson's Directorate of Public Works Traffic Engineer, Rick Orphan, at 526-9267 or Fort Carson's Army Corps of Engineers Transformation Resident Office, Maj. John Hudson, at 526-4974.

Claims against the estate — Those with claims of indebtedness to the estate of Lt. Col. Eric J. Kruger, deceased, should contact 2nd Lt. Jacob T. Carlisle at 526-9587.

Those with claims of indebtedness to the estate of Sgt. Kevin Fair, deceased, should contact 2nd Lt. Jonathan Frederickson at 526-4336.

NORAD's Santa-tracking Web site opens for 2006 season

*North American Aerospace
Defense Command*

PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE,
— In advance of the holiday season and its 51st season of tracking Santa Claus on his annual journey around the world, the North American Aerospace Defense

Command activated its "NORAD Tracks Santa" Web site for 2006.

The U.S.-Canadian command's program began in 1955 when an errant phone call was made to NORAD's predecessor, the Continental Air Defense Command Operations Center in Colorado Springs. The call was from a local child who dialed a telephone number misprinted in a local newspaper advertisement.

The commander who answered the phone that night gave the youngster the information he requested — the whereabouts of Santa

Claus — and thus the tradition of NORAD's tracking Santa began.

The program has grown immensely since it was first presented on the Internet in 1998. Last year, the Web site received 912 million "hits" from 204 countries and

territories. In addition, the NORAD Tracks Santa Operations Center, occupied by 550 volunteers on Christmas Eve, answered nearly 55,000 phone calls and nearly 98,240 e-mails from children around the world.

This year NORAD Public Affairs needs hundreds of volunteers to take two-hour shifts at the NTS operation center on Peterson Air Force Base. Anyone interested in being a NORAD Tracks Santa tracker should e-mail NNC.PA.NTS.OMB@Northcom.mil.

The Web site — www.noradstracks.org — features the history of the program, information on how NORAD tracks Santa and interactive games. Beginning at 2 a.m. Mountain Time Dec. 24, the Web site will feature a minute-by-minute update on Santa's travels. Information is available in English, French, German, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.



Celebrating Mother's Day



Above: Members of Conjunto Folklorico Aires de Panama dance group join hands during the Lord's Prayer at Soldiers' Memorial Chapel Dec. 3.



Above: Conjunto Folklorico Aires de Panama dance group performs a traditional Panamanian dance for Mother's Day in Fellowship Hall Dec. 3.

Story and photos by Michael J. Pach
Mountaineer staff

Most of us think of Mother's Day in May, but for Panamanians, Mother's Day falls on Dec. 8, which is also the Catholic holy day, the Immaculate Conception, that honors Mary as the mother of Jesus. Since Mary is considered the ultimate mother and most Panamanians are Catholics, it is seen as the perfect opportunity to honor all mothers.

Soldiers, family members and friends of Panamanian heritage observed Mother's Day at



Above: Cynthia Bloodworth, right, and Marena Fennell lead the procession out of church after Mass.

Panamanian-style

*Be our
health and our
protection*

Soldiers' Memorial Chapel Sunday during a Catholic service. After Mass, visitors were treated to empanadas (deep fried corn meal stuffed with beef and tomato paste), ojalda (deep fried dough) and other foods as well as a performance by Panamanian dance group, Conjunto Folklorico Aires de Panama.

Members of the dance group, led by Yolanda Cousar and Diana Johnson, were adorned in traditional Panamanian clothing as they assisted with Mass, handed out flowers to mothers as they exited the chapel and performed their dance routine.

The dance group is comprised of children ranging from preschoolers to teenagers who also learn the traditions of the culture along with the dance steps. Some of the members are military family members and Cousar is always looking for more children to join the group.

Conjunto Folklorico Aires de Panama will perform at a Panamanian Mother's Day celebration Saturday at 6 p.m. at Hola Night Club, 3738 Astrozon Blvd., Colorado Springs.

The group will also dance at the post's Holiday Volunteer Social Dec. 14 at the Elkhorn Conference Center.

Anyone interested in learning more about Conjunto Folklorico Aires de Panama can contact Cousar at 231-1471 or president@airesdepanama.com or visit the Web site at www.airesdepanama.com.

Right: Conjunto Folklorico Aires de Panama dance group poses after its Mother's Day performance in Fellowship Hall.

Left: Diana Johnson makes an announcement during Mass while wearing a tembleques (headdress) made from fish scales.



Above: Yolanda Cousar smiles after receiving a Mother's Day gift. She is wearing a la montuna or servant dress.

AFAP delegates review top Army issues

Story and photo by Margaret McKenzie

U.S. Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation Division

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — Delegates at the 24th Army Family Action Plan conference reviewed 68 issues from Army installations throughout the world Nov. 14-17.

The issues were distributed into eight workgroup categories: wounded warrior, entitlements, family support (of which there were two groups), force-support, medical (of which there were two groups) and outside-of-the-continental-United States.

The top five conference issues of 2006, as voted by the delegates, were:

- Traumatic brain injury rehabilitation program at military medical centers,
- Traumatic servicemember's group life insurance annual supplement,
- Co-Pay for replacement parts of durable medical equipment and prosthetics,
- Convicted sex offender registry outside the continental U.S., and
- Retroactive traumatic servicemembers group life insurance compensation.

The top five critical active issues previously introduced into the AFAP process include:

- Award contracts for household-goods shipments to moving companies based on performance and claims history, as well as cost. Provide full replacement value for lost/damaged household goods;
- Allow Soldiers with at least 10 years of service to transfer their Montgomery GI

Bill benefits to their dependents;

- Authorize the use of permissive temporary duty for fathers upon birth of a child;
- Eliminate the expiration date for Montgomery GI Bill educational benefits; and
- Allow servicemembers to accumulate 90 days of leave until termination of service.

The four services identified by delegates as this year's most valuable are Army Community Service; Morale, Welfare and Recreation; Army Wounded Warrior Program; and medical care.

Additionally, the delegates voted on the top five mobilization/deployment and family-support strengths. Included on the list were Military OneSource and Army Community Service programs. Morale Welfare and Recreation, family readiness groups and rest and relaxation all tied for third place, and the rapid fielding initiative rounded out the list.

The top three mobilization/deployment and family challenges as determined by the delegates were length and extension of deployments; deployment personnel tempo; and the stop-loss program. The need for more standard National Guard, Active Guard and Reserve, Army Reserve, and active-duty remote family readiness groups, and incomplete family reintegration training for children and teens were tied for fourth place.

A meeting of the General Officer Steering Committee, chaired by the Lt. Gen. James Lovelace, was held in conjunction with the AFAP conference. Senior Department of Defense and Army leaders reviewed 24 issues in the AFAP process. Two were completed:

- Dental and Vision Insurance Coverage for Federal Employees: Public Law U.S.108-496

authorizes a stand-alone dental and vision benefit program for federal employees.

Employees will pay 100 percent of the premium costs for dental and vision coverage. The Office of Personnel Management has implemented seven supplemental dental plans and three vision benefit plans for federal employees, retirees and their dependents. Open season began Nov. 13 and will run through Dec. 11.

- Basic allowance for housing for activated Reserve component: The fiscal 2006 National Defense Authorization Act authorized full BAH for Reserve-component Soldiers on

See **AFAP** on Page 22



AFAP delegates Karin Markert, Myra Williams and Michelle Zittrauer, along with others, participate in the Force Support work group at the 24th AFAP conference in Alexandria, Va., Nov. 14-17.

Holidays at home



**by Chap. (Capt.)
Wayne Keast**

*64th Brigade Support
Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade
chaplain*

Holidays at home — what a sweet thought that is. Those of us in the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, know very well personally that not everyone gets to experience it. The 3rd HBCT was called into service in the War against Terror on Nov. 27, 2005, right at the close of the Thanksgiving weekend. Having only one holiday at home caused many Soldiers and family members to appreciate that experience.

It has been a difficult year, a growing year, a challenging year and, for some, a tragic year. Tragedy made its appearance in many forms: enduring the loss of a friend or loved one in war; loss of friend or family member through accident, illness or age right here at home; and even in the break up of a family unit or promotion pass over or other career stoppers. When plans do

not pan out and we need to divert to a plan “B,” stress mounts and we can feel alone and isolated.

We can endure each challenge and win the victory if we remember a few simple things. Don’t go it alone. A year without family or friends wasn’t easy but at home we have choices. If you don’t have family, find someone who is lonely, make a friend and share yourself with them.

In 2 Corinthians 1:3 God tells us that he allows us to endure difficult times so that we can minister to others who are going through the same thing. Also, we grow and learn and mature in our walk of faith as we share with others. The Bible says that God is the God of all comfort. He wishes to use us in the process of helping others.

Being home for the holidays is a great privilege and so is sharing your life with someone who is struggling. This holiday season reach out to the lonely or forgotten or hurting. Share your holiday with someone and love your neighbor as you love yourself.

If you’re not sure what to do,

here is a possibility. In our home this holiday we will be giving back to Jesus a present for his birthday.

James instructs us to care for the orphans and the widows in their affliction. There are Christian families around the world who are without their fathers because of imprisonment. These fathers have done nothing wrong other than being Christians.

Our family is going to put together a gift package that will go to a needy family during the Christmas season. This is our second year of helping a family with special needs.

Last year, just before deployment, our family sent a package to Iraq to help a family in need of some basic things. Not only is this a great help to others, it is also following a command of God to help others. It also teaches the children in the home to be a bit more generous and gives them an opportunity to share on a very special day that is set aside for giving. It is more blessed to give than to receive! Happy holidays.

Chapel

Mass for the Feast of the Immaculate

Conception — Today at noon and 6 p.m. at Soldiers' Memorial Chapel.

Soldiers' Memorial Chapel Protestant

Sunday School — goes looking for "Bible heroes." Protestant Sunday School Classes take on a new theme with the key scripture theme of "Be strong and courageous ... for the Lord your God is with you." The classes will study key Bible stories while having fun with music and games. Classes for all ages are in session each Sunday, 9:30-10:30 a.m.

Christmas Week Services

Catholic

Dec. 23, regular Mass at 5 p.m., Soldiers' Memorial Chapel.

Dec. 24, regular Mass at 9:15 a.m. at Soldiers' Memorial Chapel.

Dec. 24, regular Mass at 11 a.m. at Provider Chapel.

Dec. 24, Christmas Eve: Children's Mass at 5 p.m., Soldiers' Memorial Chapel

Dec. 24, Candle-Lighting Mass at 10 p.m., Soldiers' Memorial Chapel.

Dec. 25, Christmas Mass, 9:15 a.m. at Soldiers' Memorial Chapel.

Jan. 1, Feast of the Holy Family, 6 p.m., Soldiers' Memorial Chapel.

Protestant:

Dec. 24, Christmas Eve Candle-Lighting Service, 7 p.m. at Soldiers' Memorial Chapel

Samoan

Dec. 24, 10 p.m.-midnight, service and youth presentation.

Dec. 31, 10 p.m.-midnight, New Year's Eve Service.

Jan. 4, 6-8 p.m., special New Year Week prayer service.

Chapel Schedule

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Day	Time	Service	Chapel	Location	Contact Person
Mon., Wed., Fri.	noon	Mass	Healer	Evans Army Hospital	Fr. Gagliardo/526-7412
Tues., Thurs.	noon	Mass	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Chap. Goellen/526-5769
Saturday	5 p.m.	Mass	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Chap. Goellen/526-5769
Sunday	9:15 a.m.	Mass	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Chap. Goellen/526-5769
Sunday	10:30 a.m.	CRE	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Pat Treacy/524-2458
Sunday	11 a.m.	Mass	Healer	Evans Army Hospital	Fr. Gagliardo/526-7412
Sunday	11 a.m.	Mass	Provider	Barkeley & Ellis	Chap. Goellen/526-5769
Tuesday	7 p.m.	RCIA	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Pat Treacy/524-2458
Saturday	4 p.m.	Reconciliation	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Chap. Goellen/526-5769

PROTESTANT

Sunday	9 a.m.	Protestant	Healer	Evans Army Hospital	Chap. Cartee/526-7387
Sunday	9 a.m.	Protestant Communion	Provider	Barkeley & Ellis	Chap. Mitchell/650-8042
Sunday	11 a.m.	Protestant	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Chap. Nicholas/526-8011
Sunday	11 a.m.	Prot./Gospel	Prussman	Barkeley & Prussman	Chap. Borden/526-4206
Sunday	9:30 a.m.	Sun. School	Prussman	Barkeley & Prussman	Chap. Borden/526-4206
Sunday	9:30 a.m.	Sun. School	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Dr. Scheck/526-5626
Tuesday	9 a.m.	PWOC	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Chap. Nicholas/526-8011
Sunday	11 a.m.	Contemporary	Veterans'	Magrath & Titus	Chap. Fritts/526-8890
Tuesday	7 p.m.	PYOC	Soldiers'	Nelson & Martinez	Ms. Scheck/231-9511
Sunday	9 a.m.	Samoan	Veterans'	Titus	Chap. Fritts/526-3888

JEWISH

For information and a schedule of Jewish Sabbath services, call the U.S. Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel at 333-2636.

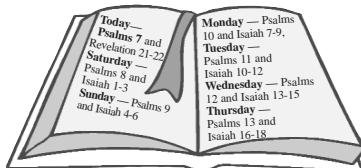
WICCA

Monday 6:30 p.m. building 4800, corner of Harr and O'Connell Rhonda Helfrich/338-9464

NATIVE AMERICAN SWEATLODGE

Native American Sweatlodge ceremonies (He Ska Akicita Inipi) are offered to military dependents and Department of Defense personnel. These lodges are traditional Lakota spiritual ceremonies for cleansing, purification and prayer, and are fully sanctioned and supported by the Fort Carson Chaplain Command. Please call the following for information and directions: Charlie Erwin at 382-8177 or erwincl@msn.com; or Zoe Goodblanket 442-0929.

Daily Bible readings: To assist in regular scripture reading, the following scriptures are recommended. These scriptures are part of the common daily lectionary, which is designed to present the entire Bible over a three-year cycle.



The Army Cycle of Prayer — Please pray this week for the following:

Unit: For the Soldiers, noncommissioned officers, and officers of the 4th Infantry Division, headquartered at Fort Hood, Texas

Army: For Keith Eastlin, assistant secretary of the Army for Installation and Environment and the military and civilian staff who support this agency's activities.

State: For all the Soldiers and families from the state of South Dakota. Pray also for Gov. Mike Rounds, the state legislators and local officials of the "Mount

Rushmore State."

Nation: For the president's Domestic Policy Council and its oversight of policy involving education, health, welfare, justice, federalism, transportation, environment, labor, and veterans' affairs.

Religious: For the Jewish community as they begin eight days of thanksgiving and praise, known as Hanukkah, beginning Dec. 16.

For more information on the Army Cycle of Prayer, or to pray for items from previous weeks, visit the cycle's web site at www.armychaplain.com.

Insurance companies to pay refunds to Soldiers for deceptive sales

by **Elaine Wilson**

Fort Sam Houston Public Affairs

FORT SAM HOUSTON, Texas — Life insurance companies are being held accountable for their improper sales practices to military members.

Four companies in the past three months have agreed to a multi-state settlement agreement after Texas Department of Insurance investigators uncovered a pattern of deception to young troops.

Under the agreements, the companies will refund more than \$70 million to more than 93,000 consumers, including about 71,000 servicemembers, according to Texas Department of Insurance news releases.

The first settlement, reached Aug. 3, came after a 20-month investigation by the states of Texas and Georgia, together with the Department of Justice and the Securities and Exchange Commission, into the sales practices of three companies: American-Amicable Life Insurance Company of Texas, Pioneer American Insurance Company and Pioneer Security Life Insurance Company.

State regulators and federal agencies claim that the life

insurance companies “targeted young recruits and misled them into believing they were buying an investment product. The servicemembers were actually purchasing an expensive term-life product that was coupled with a side fund and called the “Wealth Builder” or “Horizon Life,” according to the release.

The second settlement, reached Oct. 17, involves the Boston Mutual Life Insurance Company.

In 2004, TDI investigators learned that several Boston Mutual agents were soliciting and selling life insurance to low-ranking Soldiers by misrepresenting the insurance as a savings or investment plan, said Jim Hurley, TDI spokesman. The activity led to the multi-state examination of the company’s sales to military personnel.

The company will refund a total of \$427,529.57 to 1,784 military members who bought life insurance policies between Jan. 1, 2002, and April 30, 2005.

Consumers who feel they are affected but have not received notification can call the companies’ consumer service center at (800) 736-7311.

AFAP

From Page 18

active duty after 30 days of service regardless of the type of orders or reason used to bring the Soldiers to active duty.

Of the issues that were presented, 22 were listed as active and will be worked until resolution. The GOSC approved the entry of two new issues into the AFAP — Army Career and Alumni Program funding and permanent family readiness support assistants.

AFAP was created in 1983 with the initial AFAP planning conference, and developed fully in 1984 to help the Army address the needs and concerns of family members. The program highlighted the importance of Army families to overall Army success.

The concept of identifying issues to be resolved through worldwide representation of Army family members grew into the AFAP process. It provides a way for policy to become a tangible end-product for Soldiers and their families.

The Family and Morale Welfare and Recreation Command oversees the AFAP process to ensure that issues are referred to the appropriate agencies for resolution. Semi-annual GOSC meetings monitor the progress of each issue until it is resolved or deemed unattainable.

“The issues that we will review

this morning, we are going to delve into in great detail because we owe that to you,” said Lt. Gen. James Campbell, in his opening remarks.

“You have taken a step out of your lives and come from distant stations to be here this week and to make your contributions felt,” he continued.

For the past 24 years there have been 618 issues in the AFAP process that have driven 101 legislative changes, 145 Department of Defense Army policy and regulatory changes, and improved programs and services.

“It is very important that those who have never experienced this understand what happens here today,” Campbell said, “and see how our United States Army stands up and listens to the concerns of those we serve.”

“I have been an advocate for this process for 34 years, and I have watched it evolve,” said Lt. Gen. Robert Wilson, assistant chief of staff for Installation Management. “I think it is absolutely essential to an Army at war; critical to retaining the all-volunteer force and doing what we say we want to do, which is taking care of families and Soldiers.

“This process is about Soldier and family readiness,” he said, “and I am really happy with it.”

The GOSC will meet again in May 2007 to work on issues identified during this conference, and to continue their efforts to resolve issues identified in previous years.

On-post chiropractic clinic for active duty Soldiers

Getting the kinks out

Story and photo by

Rebecca E. Tonn

Mountaineer staff

Who knew? Fort Carson has offered on-post chiropractic care since 1995, as part of a Department of Defense demonstration project.

In 2000, Congress authorized chiropractic care as a permanent benefit for active duty personnel, said Dr. Patrick Casey, one of two doctors of chiropractic at the Fort Carson Chiropractic Clinic.

Casey has a master's in health care sciences and has been practicing for 30 years.

"The Army is a tough business. I treat more acute problems here than I ever did in private practice," Casey said.

The clinic is full-service. Casey and Dr. Steven Hintz refer patients to other clinics — for dermatologic, podiatric or orthopedic services, to name a few — when it is necessary. Typically, a Soldier may require

a dozen to 20 treatments for complete relief, said Casey.

When treating a patient, the doctors first use heat packs to relax the muscles and then do deep tissue work to release trigger points and to ease muscle spasms before they do the adjustment. Then they give the Soldiers instructions or exercises, if necessary.

Casey recommends chiropractic treatment for many types of spinal pain, from headaches to herniated discs to back pain from slipping on ice.

Staff Sgt. Jason Gribshaw, 62nd Engineering Company (Sapper), 4th Engineer Battalion, 43rd Area Support Group, is pleased with the accessibility of chiropractic care at Fort Carson.

"I got a referral right away; I had no problems whatsoever. At Fort Stewart (Georgia), I was going off post and paying for it out-of-pocket, because I could not get a referral.

"Dr. Casey doesn't just

adjust me; he does deep tissue work and loosens up my muscles before he does the adjustment.

"Usually, when I come in here, I'm in pain, and when I leave, I feel fine," Gribshaw said.

Soldiers need a referral from their physician assistant or primary care manager before making an appointment.

"The staff here is friendly. We really have a good crew. Typically, our patients are young and healthy men and women; we just help them get back to work," Casey said.

The clinic is located at the corner of Berkeley Avenue and Ellis Street, in building 1150. Hours are Mondays-Thursdays from 7 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and Fridays from 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. To make an appointment, call Military Health Care Services at 457-CARE (2273).



Dr. Patrick Casey adjusts Staff Sgt. Jason Gribshaw's back, during Gribshaw's recent visit to the on-post Chiropractic Clinic.

Meeting the needs of the single Soldier

Story and photo by Michael J. Pach

Mountaineer staff

No one would argue that the life of a Soldier is challenging, especially if that Soldier is married and has children, but what about the life of the single Soldier?

The Department of the Army recognized that single Soldiers have specific needs that differ from married Soldiers, so it established the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program in 1986.

The BOSS mission is to assist post commanders in improving the quality of life for single Soldiers through recreational and leisure activities, addressing

quality-of-life issues and using community service opportunities as an outlet for self improvement.

Although Fort Carson's program has been on hiatus for the past two years because of deployments, it is being brought back to life through the efforts of its new president, Sgt. Charles Gray.

Gray was selected as BOSS president Oct. 8 by Command Sgt. Maj. Terrance McWilliams, Division West, First Army and Fort Carson. With the help of Ann Edinger, Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation, and Master Sgt. Lisa Belsher, DMWR noncommissioned officer in charge, he is working on meeting the program's goals of raising morale by having fun, developing leaders through community service, reducing alcohol-related incidents and increasing retention and unit readiness.

"Charles is very easy to work with and we are excited to have the BOSS program back on its feet," said Edinger.

As BOSS president, Gray is the voice of the single Soldier on Fort Carson. He has put together a team of single-Soldier representatives that work with him to reach program goals. These representatives are appointed from brigades, battalions and companies and act as a communication channel between Gray and their respective units.

In a short period of time, Gray has reintegrated the BOSS program to Soldiers through reintegration meetings, established a partnership with Army and Air Force Exchange service to recycle pallets to raise money for the group, set up a mentoring program through Big Brothers/Big Sisters at a local middle school, provided support for children of deployed Soldiers, scheduled ski trips for Jan. 6

and Feb. 3 and coordinated the BOSS Army Family Action Plan.

During the BOSS Army Family Action Plan, attendees put together a list of the five most important issues facing single Soldiers on Fort Carson. Those issues were presented at the Fort Carson AFAP and two of them were chosen to be submitted to U.S. Army Forces Command for resolution.

Gray is also working with the Army Substance Abuse Program to reduce the number of drug and alcohol related incidents involving Soldiers from post.

"My main focus is to provide a positive outlet for Soldiers to alleviate these incidents and also expose them to community service," said Gray.

Gray is no stranger to community service. He has often tutored school children and visited juvenile detention homes to encourage youngsters to better their lives. He wants to strengthen that aspect of the BOSS program.

"I want to establish that pillar and show Soldiers it is a good outlet if you want to use your time wisely and better yourself," said Gray. "One thing that all Soldiers have is time and talent."

Another partnership Gray is trying to establish is one with the commissary, that would provide food once a month, an overview of the benefits of shopping there and a chance to mingle with other single Soldiers.

BOSS meetings are held the third Thursday of each month from 2-4 p.m. at Xtremes. BOSS representatives present issues from their units and service representatives are scheduled as guest speakers to help Soldiers learn more about the things that are available to them on post. For more information, call Gray at 524-BOSS (2677).



BOSS president Sgt. Charles Gray, right, and Command Sgt. Maj. Terrance McWilliams serve Thanksgiving dinners at Odd Fellows Hall.

VFW Warriors deliver toys to Santa's Workshop



The Veterans of Foreign Wars Warriors, of Post 101 and Post 3917, have fun while unloading the toys they recently collected. The Warriors donated the toys to Santa's Workshop Tuesday.

**Story and photo by
Rebecca E. Tonn**

Mountaineer staff

Veterans of Foreign Wars Warriors Motorcycle Organization of Posts 101 and 3917 rode their motorcycles through Gate 1 to Santa's Workshop on Tuesday to donate toys. The military police provided an escort with lights flashing and sirens serenading.

The Warriors, along with the Ladies Auxiliary of Post 101, have been collecting donated toys at the Fort Carson Post Exchange and at various locations throughout Colorado Springs for the past two months.

Smiling and joking, the Warriors and members of the Ladies Auxiliary unloaded the toys from a sports utility vehicle, which was packed full of toys — dump trucks, dolls, board games, stuffed animals, soccer balls, in-line skates, building blocks and

much more. The VFW Warriors donated more than \$1,200 in toys.

Lt. Col. Robert (Bob) Walker, Division Chemical Officer, 4th Infantry Division, a member of Post 101, said that the toy donation was made possible by the generosity of Soldiers and patrons at the PX and by the Colorado Springs community.

"We want to welcome redeployed Soldiers — the veterans that are returning — to visit either Post 101 or Post 3917," Walker said. Post 101 is located at 702 S. Tejon St., Colorado Springs, and Post 3917 is located at 4715 W. Clearview Dr., Colorado Springs, or visit the Website at www.vfw-warriors.com.

Santa's Workshop is open through today. It is run by volunteers from the Fort Carson Officers' Spouses' Club and distributes toys to lower-income Soldiers and their families.



Garrison Commander Col. Eugene Smith, center, gets the Holiday Village started with a little help from his friends as children assist with the flipping of the switch that turned on the lights at the Special Events Center.



Visitors to the Holiday Village at the Special Events center decorate cookies.



The Dickens Carolers sing holiday songs for the crowd at Holiday Village in the Special Events Center.



Colorado Springs World Arena skating instructors provide ice skating lessons for children of all ages at the Holiday Village.



Young members of the Springs Ballet perform an excerpt from "The Nutcracker" for the audience at the Holiday Village.

Story and photos by
Michael J. Pach
Mountaineer Staff

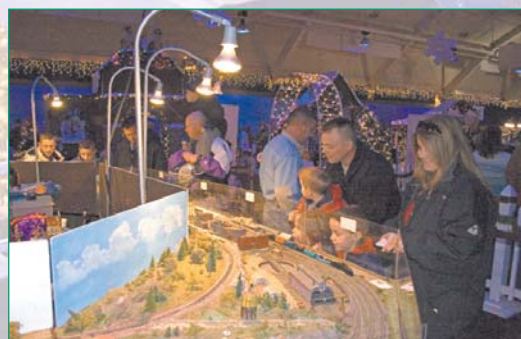
The Directorate of Morale, Welfare and Recreation held its annual Holiday Village event Nov. 30 through Dec. 3 at the Special Events Center. This year's theme was "The Holiday Express," which featured a showing of the movie, *The Polar Express*, on a 25-foot, outdoor screen and a model train display. Other attractions included a wide variety of entertainment, crafts, cookie decorating, letter writing to and photos with Santa, gift and food vendors,



Children get help writing letters to Santa on computers at the Holiday Village.



Holiday Village guests wait in line to tell Santa what they want for Christmas and to have their photo taken with him.



Family members enjoy the model train display at the Holiday Village in the Special Events Center.



Inspector Magic delights the crowd at Holiday Village in the Special Events Center as he makes "snow" from a napkin.

Now Showing FREE Sunday Movies

Sunday - December 10th:

Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas (PG) at 1 p.m.
Miracle on 34th Street (PG) at 4 p.m.

Sunday - December 17th:

A Christmas Story (PG) at 1 p.m.
It's a Wonderful Life (PG) at 4 p.m.

Freedom Performing Arts Center
Building 1129
Corner of Specker and Ellis Ave.
For more information:
526-1867



Martin Luther King, Jr. Art Contest



Theme: Remember! Celebrate! Act! It's a Day On, Not a Day Off!

Details:

Age Categories: 0 - 5, 6 - 8, 9 - 11, 12 - 18 year olds

Due Date: 9 January 2007

Locations to turn in artwork: CYS Centers, Central Registration (Bldg 1518).

NOTE: Artwork can not be larger than 16"x20". On the back of the artwork please include full name, age, telephone number, turn-in location and DoD affiliation (Active Duty/ DoD Civilian/ neither).

Prizes:

1st Place: \$50 AAFES gift certificate, \$50 Walmart gift certificate & \$15 DMWR Bucks

2nd Place: \$50 AAFES gift certificate & \$25 Walmart gift certificate

NOTE: Prizes to be awarded February 2, 2007 at the McMahon Theater during Black History Month Gospel Concert. Artworks will be displayed around post following the competition.

1st place artworks will be published in the Mountaineer

For more information contact: Patricia Rosas- EEO Officer

(719) 526-9673

patricia.rosas@carson.army.mil

Coming Attractions



featuring



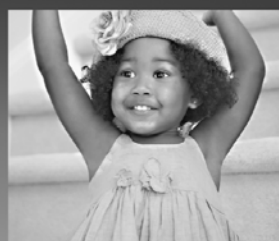
- Digital Lounge
- High tech on-line gaming
- Wifi
- Coffee Lounge

Coming to the old Xtremes location, Building 1532

For information: 576-7540



Fort Carson Family Child Care



Stay at home with your children and nurture the hearts and minds of all children while earning money!

Benefits of becoming an FCC Provider:

- Free training on Child Development and Business Practices
- Free Child Care during training classes
- Free starter kit
- Free use of the toy lending library

Initial orientation is conducted the first Friday of every month from 9 am - 10 am at Child & Youth Services, Building 5510 on Harr Avenue.

For more information call

Fort Carson

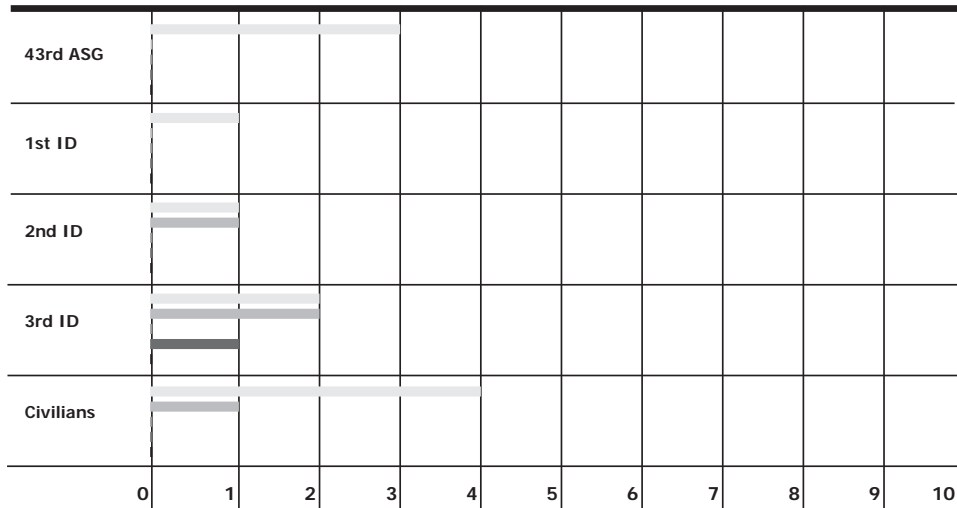
Child & Youth Services - Family Child Care 526-3338/1108



Cited violations for DUI, DWAI, Article 111

— Nov. 1-30

■ DUI (On Post)
■ DWAI (On Post)
■ UCMJ Art 111
(Drunken Driving)
■ DUI (Off Post)
■ DWAI (Off Post)



Youth Center offers program for home-school students

Story and photos by Rebecca E. Tonn
Mountaineer staff

Each Wednesday, Christine Danis takes her home-schooled children to the Fort Carson Youth Center, where they play rat race with dodge balls or other games, learn computer skills, do homework and make arts and crafts.

"It's nice to be able to come here; it's peaceful and a more open opportunity," said Danis. She is married to Navy Lt. Cmdr. Kurt Danis. They have



Felicia Bray, computer lab instructor with Youth Services, assists David at the computer, while Emily watches.

lived in Colorado Springs for four years. Danis recently heard about the Youth Center's home-school program from the Protestant Women of the Chapel at Fort Carson.

"We do life skills at home, math, English and some arts and crafts, but here all four (children) get to use the computer," Danis said. Instructors work with the children for 30-45 minutes, before the children move on to the next subject, she said.

David, 7, likes doing arts and crafts and learning to do homework on the computer — because it's fun. Evelyn, 9, likes painting in the art room, and she thinks the instructors are very nice. Dean, 10, likes using the computer lab and "playing rat race during sport time." Emily, 11, likes drawing with colored pencils and using the computers.

"You can do almost anything on the computer," Emily said.

Danis has been home-schooling her children for eight years. She uses a Liberty Press curriculum and is a member of the Christian Home Educators of Colorado. Her children will participate in the CHEC spelling bee in February.

"At home we work with clay, paint and mixed media, but they have more paint and colors here — it's a very good art studio. It would be difficult to build an art studio like this at home," Danis said.

The Youth Center hopes to generate more par-



The Danis children enjoy a game of rat race in the small gym at the Youth Center with Instructor Sean Gillotte, sports specialist with Youth Services.

ticipation in its weekly home-school program. Mike Pazdera, facility director for Youth Services, would like to see parents exchanging ideas and perhaps helping one another's children.

"Everyone has his or her own talent and we want to tap into that because we have the resources here," Pazdera said. "I'd like to have 30 parents here, interacting with the children and using the facilities.

The Youth Center is available to kindergarten-12 home-school students on Wednesdays from 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Parents must remain on the premises with children who are 10 and under. The Youth Center provides instructors for these activities: arts and crafts, computer lab, homework lab and sports/fitness.



More Christmas stuff

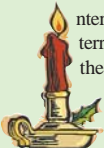


Holiday events are in Denver, Pueblo

Happening

by Nel Lampe

Mountaineer staff



Interested in exploring new territory while celebrating the holidays? For a different point of view, check out activities and events in Pueblo, just 40 miles south on Interstate 25, or go north to Denver, about 70 miles on I-25.

Denver is a good place to visit during the holiday season. Just seeing the red and green lights on the Denver City and County Building is worth the trip. It's in downtown Denver.

If a mini vacation in the mile-high city interests you, check out the special holiday rates offered by some Denver hotels. In honor of the "mile high" city, at 5,280 feet altitude, some hotels offer \$52.80 special rates. Find the hotels listed at www.milehighholidays.com.

Denver's downtown is crowded with history, restaurants, skyscrapers, hotels, mountain views and night life, not to mention museums, galleries and sports and entertainment venues.

Denver's 16th Street Mall — a pedestrian mall with no cars allowed — is a great place to shop, dine or people watch. Free shuttle buses run the length of the park-like mall near the heart of downtown. There are restaurants galore, including a Hard Rock Café, The Cheesecake Factory and Johnny Rockets hamburgers, along with several fast food establishments. The Pavillions shopping center and dozens of stores and shops are available. Ride one of the shuttles the entire length of the mall to see all the holiday decorations and get off at whatever shop or restaurant interests you.

Also downtown is the Colorado capitol and the Denver Performing Arts Center, with its multi theaters. Several holiday productions are available.

"A Christmas Carol" is in the Stage Theatre until Dec. 24. "Season's Greetings" is in the Space Theatre until Dec. 23. "Sweet Charity," with Molly Ringwald, is in Buell Theatre until Dec. 17. Check Ticketmaster, 520-9090 for ticket information.

Near downtown is the Molly Brown House, east of the State Capitol in the Capitol Hill neighborhood, at 1340 Pennsylvania St. It is splendidly decorated in Victorian style and is open for tours from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday



Photo courtesy Denver Zoo

Colorful lights are in the Denver Zoo for the holidays. The zoo is in Denver's City Park; take Colorado Avenue off Interstate 25 north to the park.



Photo courtesy Denver Botanic Gardens

Left: "Blossoms of Light" is the holiday event held in Denver's Botanic Gardens through the holidays.



A Christmas Market in the German tradition is at Cherry Creek Shopping Center in Denver.

Below: Old-fashioned horse-pulled hay rides are part of the Georgetown annual Christmas Market.

Photo by Nel Lampe



Photo by Nel Lampe



Places to see in the Pikes Peak area.

Dec. 8, 2006

Holiday

From Page 41

and from noon-3:30 p.m. on Sundays. The cost is \$6.50 for adults and \$3 for children ages 6-12. Call (303) 832-4092 for information.

Disney on Ice's "Disneyland Adventure" is in the Denver Coliseum Dec. 13-17, with several performances. Ticket prices begin at \$15 and are available at (303) 295-4444, or www.disneyonice.com. Take Interstate 70 East when it intersects Interstate 25, to reach the Coliseum.

The Wildlife Experience has a "Breakfast with Santa" Saturday. Prices are \$10 for children 12 and younger, \$16 for adults. Tickets must be purchased in advance, call (720) 488-3300. The price includes breakfast, holiday crafts and a visit with Santa. Bring your own camera to take pictures. The Wildlife Experience is in Parker, take the Lincoln Exit by the Park Meadows Mall.

The Downtown Aquarium hosts a breakfast buffet with Santa, which is \$14.99 for adults and \$7.98 for children ages 3-12. Children 3 and under are free. The breakfasts are Saturday, Sunday, Dec. 16, 17, 21, 22, 23 and 24. Space is limited, make your reservation at (303) 561-4450. The Downtown Aquarium is at exit 211, near Elitch Gardens Six Flags.

Denver Zoo Lights runs through Dec. 31, from 5-9 p.m. Adults are \$7, children ages 3-11 are \$4. Thousands of twinkling lights, music, entertainment and refreshments are throughout the zoo. Free parking is in front of the zoo. The Denver Zoo is in City Park, just off Colorado Boulevard.

"Blossoms of Light" is the holiday treat offered by the Botanic Gardens, 1005 York St. near City Park. The event is from 6-9 p.m., and includes almost a million lights. For more information, call (720) 865-3544. Adults are \$8, children 4-15 are \$6.

The Seventh Annual Denver Christkindl Market is at the Cherry Creek Shopping Center through Dec. 22. Bratwursts and Gluhwein will be on hand, as well as gingerbread Christmas treats, Christmas ornaments, and other traditional Christkindl wares. Entry is free, and the market is open daily. The Christmas Market is by the Cherry Creek Shopping Center near John Elway's Restaurant and Bed, Bath & Beyond. Hours are 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., except Friday and Saturday when it's open until 9 p.m. Sunday hours are noon-7 p.m.

West of Denver on Interstate

70 at Georgetown, there's the Georgetown Christmas Market, celebrating Christmas in the traditional way: roasted chestnuts, music, St. Nicholas, carolers and horse-drawn wagon rides Saturday and Sunday. Entertainment is free. It's about 40 miles west of Denver.

Or, head to Pueblo on I-25, taking the 1st Street Exit to downtown.

A stop at the Buell Children's Museum should be on the agenda. Undoubtedly the best children's museum in Colorado, it's dressed up for the holidays with "My Favorite Things ..." Children can learn to make Christmas pop-up cards, shop for gifts at the toy cupboard, design holiday greetings cards and visit with Rudolph and friends. Caroling will be in the Magic Carpet Theater. Special guest on Saturday and Dec. 16, Mrs. Santa Claus will be in the museum from noon-2 p.m. Buell Children's Museum is open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Admission is \$4 for adults and \$3 for children.

The Historic Arkansas River Project, known as the Riverwalk, is lighted for the holidays. Take a holiday boat ride with Santa today and Saturday and Dec. 15-22, from 5-8:30 p.m. The fee is \$5 for adults and children ride free and there's complimentary hot chocolate. It's downtown in Pueblo, take exit 98B to 1st Street and go south on Union Avenue.

Pueblo also has a Christmas Posada Saturday, beginning at 3 p.m. After traditional folkloric dancing by Aymoray School of Dance on the patio of the Pueblo Convention Center, the procession starts at 4 p.m., down Main Street to the County Courthouse. The Posada is a Mexican celebration which dates to the 1550s. There's no charge for the Posada.

Pueblo's Historic Rosemount Mansion is also decorated for the holidays. The magnificent Victorian-era mansion is at 419 W. 14th St. and is decorated in Victorian splendor. Take a guided tour between 10 and 4 Tuesdays through Saturdays. Adults are charged \$6 and children are admitted for \$4.

Pueblo's Zoo is decorated for the holidays. "Electricritters" is open from 5:30-8 p.m. today through Sunday, Dec. 15-23 and Dec. 26-30. Enjoy the lights, music and refreshments at the Candy Cane Café. Take exit 101 and head west on 50th Street, go South on Pueblo Boulevard to Thatcher, take a left and head to City Park. The zoo is in the park.

For ongoing activities in Colorado Springs, refer to the



Photo courtesy Pueblo Zoo

Light displays in Pueblo Zoo's annual holiday "Electricritters" are colorful.



Photo courtesy Pueblo Riverwalk

Pueblo's Riverwalk is colorfully lit at night during the holidays. Boat rides with Santa are available.



Photo courtesy Buell Children's Museum

Kimberlee Hoffman helps Shae Swerdfeger try on a Mrs. Claus costume at Pueblo's Buell Children's Museum.

Get Out!

Concerts

John Tesh presents a concert Dec. 16 at the World Arena, call 576-2626 for tickets.

Brule, a Native American holiday concert is in the Pikes Peak Center Dec. 15, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at 520-SHOW.

Michael Martin Murphey presents a "Cowboy Christmas" at 3 p.m. Dec. 17 in the Pikes Peak Center, 190 S. Cascade Ave. Tickets start at \$27, call 574-2626 or go online at www.ticketwest.com.

"Holly and Ivy" holiday concert by the Air Force Academy Band is in the Pikes Peak Center, 190 S. Cascade, at 7 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Tickets are free but must be picked up at the Pikes Peak Center box office or World Arena box office.

"Christmas Joy Concert" Saturday at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2:30 p.m., at the Pikes Peak Center, 190 S. Cascade. Tickets start at \$12, call 520-7469.

Flying W Ranch

The Flying W Ranch is offering a complimentary meal for Soldiers with identification who take their families to a dinner and Western show in the winter steakhouse during the holiday season. Available at

5 or 8 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays, \$26 or \$24, with a reduced price for children under 8. The complimentary meal for Soldiers taking their families is also available at a Christmas chuckwagon supper Dec. 16 and 21, \$23 for adults, \$10 for children under 8. Call 598-4000 or go online to www.flyingw.com. The Flying W is at 3330 Chuckwagon Road.

Christmas trains

Pikes Peak Cog Railway has a special Christmas train which includes Santa, hot chocolate and cookies. Saturday and Dec. 16 and 23. Call 685-5401 for reservations. Tickets are \$15, leave from the station at 515 Ruxton Ave. in Manitou Springs.

Santa will be on all Royal Gorge Route 12:30 p.m. trains Saturday and Sunday, and Dec. 16-24. Children 3-12 may ride for half price in coach on all December trains. Regular coach fare is \$29.95 for adults and \$19.50 for ages 3-12. Call (888) 724-5748 for reservations. The Royal Gorge Route leaves from the train station in Cañon City.

Christmas lights at the zoos

"Electric Safari" is at Cheyenne Mountain Zoo and is half-price admission for Soldiers and their families. Show identification at the admission gate from 5:30-8 p.m. Dec. 8 through Jan. 1, except Christmas Eve. Santa is in "My Big Backyard" and so are pony rides. The zoo is behind the Broadmoor Hotel, at 4250 Cheyenne Mountain Zoo Road.

The Pueblo Zoo Has "Electricritters" during the holiday season. See the zoo lighted

in holiday splendor today, Saturday and Sunday, as well as Dec. 8-10, 15-23, and 26-30. Admission is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children. Pueblo Zoo is in the City Park in Pueblo, just off Pueblo Boulevard on the western side of Pueblo. Take Interstate 25 south to the Highway 50 west exit. Follow signs for Pueblo State Park, going south on Pueblo Boulevard to City Park; call (719) 561-1452.

Denver's Zoo celebrates "Zoo Lights" through Dec. 31, 5-9 p.m. Admission is \$7 for adults, children ages 3-11 are \$4. There's entertainment and lots of lights. Denver Zoo is in Denver's City Park, at Colorado and Steele.

Other Christmas activities

Seven Falls Holiday lighting is Dec. 16-30, except it is closed Christmas Eve. The usual admission fee is waived for visitors, but a \$3 donation to the charity, Christmas Unlimited, is requested. During the holiday season Seven Falls is lit with 200,000 lights and the Seven Falls are bathed in multi-colored lights. Gates are open 5-9:30 p.m. Santa will be at Seven Falls from 5:30-8 p.m. until Christmas Eve.

Santa's Workshop at the North Pole is open through Christmas Eve, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Soldiers and families get in for \$10 each person. The workshop is off Pikes Peak Highway, near the town of Cascade on Highway 24 west.

"Amahl and the Night Visitors," is presented by the Colorado Springs Conservatory Dec. 19 at 7 p.m., free. For information call 520-7469.



Photo by Nel Lampe

Old-fashioned Christmas

Enjoy old-fashioned Christmas events in Old Colorado City, on the city's west side along Colorado Avenue, Saturdays and Sundays. There are carriage rides and Santa is in the cabin in Bancroft Park to visit with children from noon until 4 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays. Stroll or shop along the avenue.

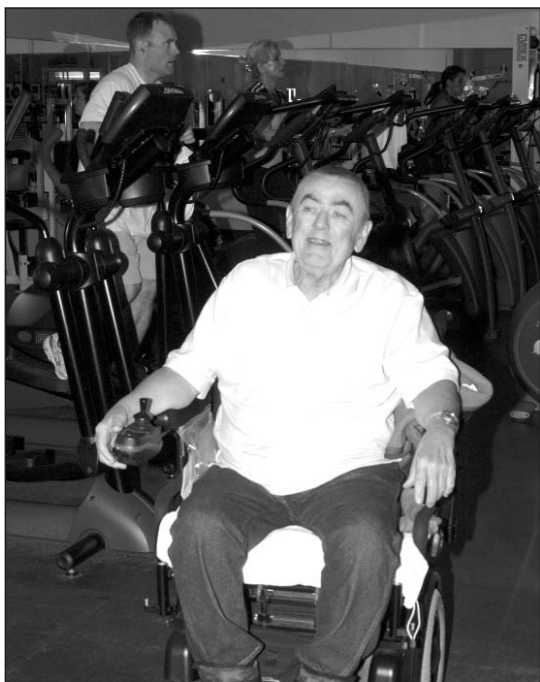
New Hazard

by James Boroch



SPORTS & LEISURE

Retiree uses fitness to overcome obstacle



Darrell Bergen looks over the exercise equipment at Forrest Fitness Center as he also considers the challenges that lie ahead.

Story and photos by Walt Johnson
Mountaineer staff

Darrell Bergen could not have been blamed had he looked at his situation and decided it was not worth the effort to fight it.

Instead, Bergen has taken on a battle to walk again with the same kind of vigor that led him to have a 22-year Air Force career and another career in the postal service.

Bergen suffers from diabetic neuropathy, a degenerative disorder that affects the nervous system. The disease got so bad for Bergen that even the simple things in life became a chore for him.

"My weight had gotten all the way up to 350 pounds and with my legs, bad as they are from diabetic neuropathy, I was having a terrible time getting out of bed, getting to the kitchen table and other things. I tried a thousand different diets. Even when I was in the military, I had trouble with my weight and was on the weight-control program a couple of times. I talked to a surgeon here first and they put me through a program. Then they said go see the civilian surgeon and they would see if they would do the surgery. I had so many chronic problems that they sent a referral out to the University of Colorado Hospital. A surgeon up there did it because they were equipped to handle any

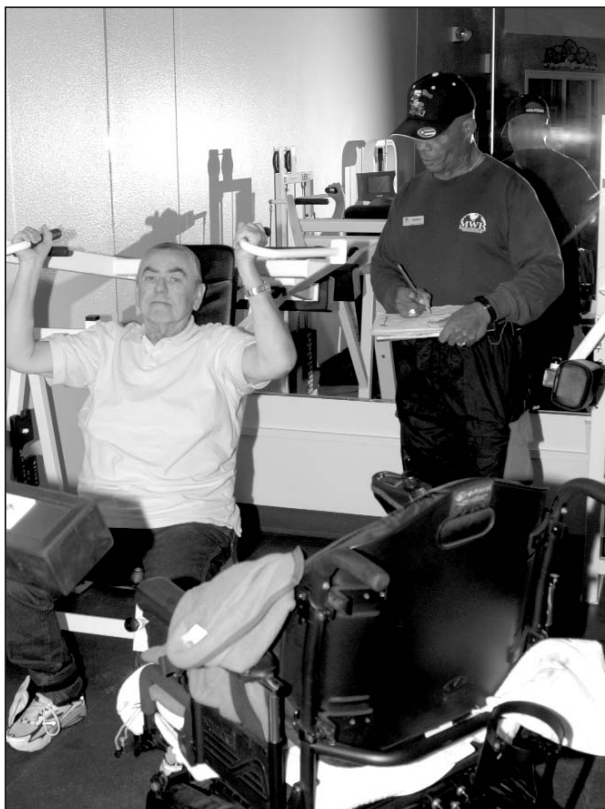
problems that may have come up while I was on the table," Bergen said.

After the successful surgery, Bergen found he was not only losing weight but also the muscle in his body. He said he got help at just the right time.

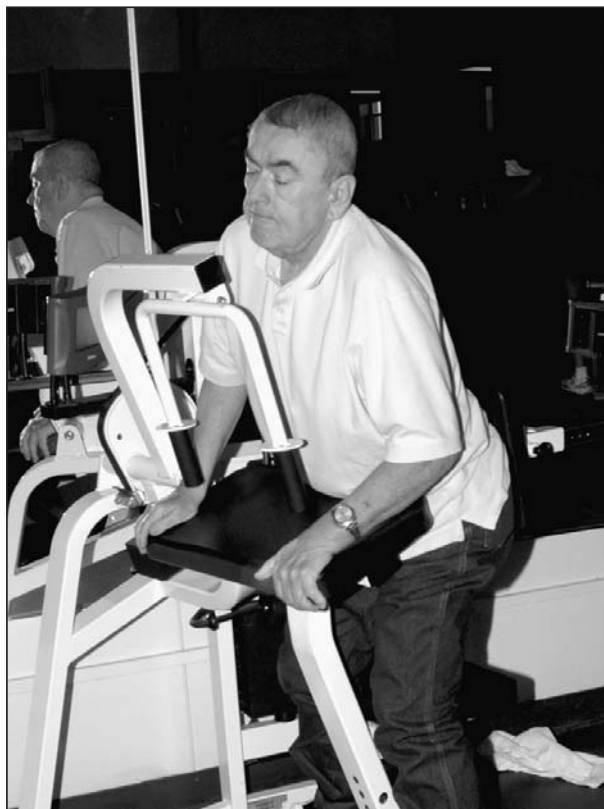
"What got me to the gym was the gastric bypass surgery I had May 8. I was losing a lot of weight real fast and wasn't wise enough to realize I was losing muscle as well. When I did realize that I was losing muscle, I ran out here to the fitness center and Norris (Cole, Forrest Fitness Center staff member) was the first person I ran into and I thank the Lord for that because that was the guy I needed," Bergen said.

What Cole and the rest of the staff has done is to help Bergen regain the independence he enjoyed before he lost the ability to use his legs freely. Bergen said the staff at the center has made his rehabilitation so much easier and enjoyable that he knows he can be back on his feet and achieve his goal by his deadline.

"I'm glad I caught it when I did and I'm glad I came to see Norris and the staff here when I did. Because if I didn't, right now I would be in some serious trouble. This is a team effort and I appreciate this half of the team. I'm tickled to death to do my fitness program here," Bergen said.



Darrell Bergen, left, goes through an exercise routine as Norris Cole, Forrest Fitness Center staff member, charts his progress.



Darrell Bergen gets on a machine that he could barely work without help before he started his training program.

On the Bench

Trojans boys win thrilling season opener against Widefield Gladiators

**Story and photo by
Walt Johnson**

Mountaineer staff

It began as the season opener for the Fountain-Fort Carson Trojans boys basketball team and turned out to be a classic high school basketball game.

The Trojans arrived at the Widefield gym prepared to play a basketball game against a Gladiator team that has been highly regarded in the early part of the season. The atmosphere was more playoff than early-season game.

The Trojans and the Gladiators have both enjoyed success in basketball in the past few seasons and this year both teams have the talent to make a major impact in the 4A state boys championships this year.

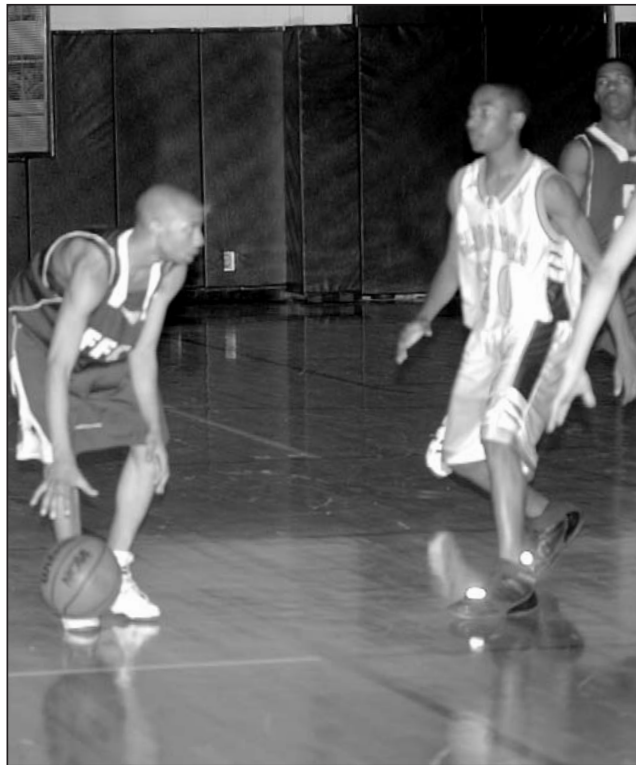
But that is the future, the present meant both teams would begin the season looking to go one up in league play. The Trojans began the contest in fine fashion and went into the locker room with an eight-point halftime lead. The crowd at

the Widefield gym was a little uneasy about the Gladiators' chance to win.

The Trojans increased the lead over the Gladiators to 10 points midway through the third period and the thought of losing was very real for the home team. Suddenly, the Gladiators turned up the defensive pressure and, by the end of the third quarter, had built up an eight-point lead over the Trojans. Suddenly it looked like the Trojan team was in danger of losing.

The fourth quarter began with the Gladiators holding onto its eight-point lead with about four minutes gone. Trojan Coach Anthony Ribaud then made some subtle adjustments to his lineup and then the comeback was on for the Trojans.

Applying a pressure defense of its own, the Trojans battled back and took a one-point lead on the Gladiators with under a minute left in the game. The Gladiators then made a huge basket to take a 77-76



Fountain-Fort Carson's DeAndrae Coffman, left, looks to make a play during the Trojans fourth quarter comeback Tuesday night.



Photo by Walt Johnson

Baby Trojans

Members of the Fountain-Fort Carson Trojans, dark jerseys, and Widefield Gladiators freshmen teams battle for a loose ball Monday night at Widefield High School.

Bench

From Page 36

lead with about 33 seconds left in the game. The Trojans almost turned the ball over with 12 seconds left in the game, but the officials ruled the ball out-of-bounds.

The Trojans set up Jamal Johnson to go one-on-one and try to get the game-winning field goal, but the Widefield defense pressured him into giving the ball to his teammate, DeAndrae Coffman, who was fouled going to the basket and stepped to the line for free throws. Coffman made the first free throw and Widefield called time out to try to ice him on the second attempt. When play resumed, Coffman's second attempt went through the net, barely touching the strings and gave the Trojans a one point lead with 1.9 seconds left. The Trojans stole the inbounds pass and took home a hard fought victory.

After the game Ribaud said he was so happy with his team's effort and said it was the best show of character by

his team in the past two years.

Rocky Mountain Sports Officials association is looking for a few good men and women who are interested in being sports officials.

The association, which does the officiating for a lot of the military and civilian sports activities in Colorado Springs, is looking for officials who are interested in learning to be an official or who want to continue their career as officials. Anyone interested in becoming a member of the association should contact John Wyatt at 382-0199 or e-mail him at tphoopref@adelphia.net.

The post youth center is currently accepting registrations for the upcoming basketball and cheerleading season on post.

In addition to basketball signups, the youth center is also signing up people interested in cheerleading for the upcoming football season. Registration is being accepted through Monday at the youth center. Also the youth center will hold a coaches clinic on Dec. 16 at 9 a.m. for bas-

Mountaineer Intramural Sports

Volleyball championship Monday

There has been high-flying action at Waller Physical Fitness Center for this year's intramural volleyball league and it is about to come to a close on Monday when the championship match will be played at 6 p.m. The teams that will play in the game were not set at press time.



Photo by Walt Johnson

Mountaineer College Sports



Falcons stun Deacons

Air Force's Nick Welch, chasing the ball, looks to recover an errant pass during the Falcons 94-58 victory Nov. 29 at the World Arena in Colorado Springs. Air Force which usually plays its home games at Clune Arnea on the Academy grounds, will meet Colorado College Saturday at 4 p.m. and Norfolk State Wednesday at 9 p.m. at the Academy.

Photo by Walt Johnson

Week 14 Football

NFL

1. Falcons vs. Buccaneers
2. Ravens vs. Chiefs
3. Colts vs. Jaguars
4. Vikings vs. Lions
5. Patriots vs. Dolphins
6. Giants vs. Panthers
7. Raiders vs. Bengals

Pigskin Picks



Samuel Cosimano
360th Trans. Company

1. Falcons, 2. Ravens, 3. Colts,
4. Lions, 5. Patriots, 6. Giants,
7. Bengals, 8. Redskins, 9. Titans,
10. Packers, 11. Seahawks, 12. Jets,
13. Broncos, 14. Cowboys, 15. Bears



William Hugo
Family Member

1. Falcons, 2. Ravens, 3. Colts,
4. Vikings, 5. Patriots, 6. Giants,
7. Bengals, 8. Eagles, 9. Titans,
10. 49ers, 11. Cardinals, 12. Jets,
13. Chargers, 14. Cowboys, 15. Bears

NFL

8. Eagles vs. Redskins
9. Titans vs. Texans
10. Packers vs. 49ers
11. Seahawks vs. Cardinals
12. Bills vs. Jets
13. Broncos vs. Chargers
14. Saints vs. Cowboys
15. Bears vs. Rams



Glen Keel
Flight Track Club

1. Falcons, 2. Chiefs, 3. Colts,
4. Lions, 5. Patriots, 6. Panthers,
7. Bengals, 8. Redskins, 9. Titans,
10. 49ers, 11. Seahawks, 12. Jets,
13. Chargers, 14. Cowboys, 15. Bears



Mandy Winkler
Family Member

1. Buccaneers, 2. Ravens, 3. Colts,
4. Vikings, 5. Dolphins, 6. Panthers,
7. Bengals, 8. Eagles, 9. Titans,
10. 49ers, 11. Seahawks, 12. Bills,
13. Broncos, 14. Cowboys, 15. Bears

